

Eckhart Tolle - Reality Is Beyond Thought

[Speaker 1] (0:40 - 1:04:55)

On a day like this, maybe you'd rather be somewhere else. If the weather weren't so wonderful, I would be happy to be here in this pinal, but it's so nice out there. There was a Zen master walking with one of his disciples out in the country, and they sat down under a tree, and the disciple didn't quite get it yet what Zen is, he'd only been there for six years.

So the master was sitting there just being, watching, listening, and the disciple was thinking. And then he said, Master, I've been thinking, how do I enter Zen? The question means, how do I enter the state of consciousness that is Zen?

And there was a long silence before the master said anything, and then the master raised his finger and said, Can you hear the sound of that mountain stream? And the disciple said, he at first couldn't hear anything, and then, Yes, I can hear it. Suddenly he heard the distant mountain stream, and the master said, Enter Zen from there.

And for just a little while the disciple was there, attentive, alert, listening. And then, a few minutes later, the face of the disciple changed again from the openness to, Master, I've been thinking. Now, what if I had said, No, I can't hear the mountain stream.

What would you have said then? And the master raised his finger again and said, Disciple, yes, enter Zen from there. So the mountain stream is beautiful.

More beautiful and deeper is the state of consciousness. If he hadn't heard the mountain stream, it would have been the same. He would have been in the state of alert attention, and might have said, I can hear nothing, and the master says, Enter Zen from there.

So here, I take this as a little signpost, teaching story, for you also to work with sound here, because there are beautiful sounds here in this place, and to be attentive to the sounds that you hear today. I will remind you again tomorrow when we may spend the day in silence, particularly good opportunity to be attentive to the many subtle sounds that you hear here, from the crunching of gravel or little stones as you walk, to crickets, frogs, the leaves moving in the wind, many sounds that are beautiful and subtle. To hear them requires a certain degree of alertness.

That's why Zen masters often raise their finger. That symbolizes not, I'm telling you, you better believe me, no, not that. It says, be alert, awake.

So that's the state is required, so when you listen to a sound, there's a field of attention that is actually more important than the sound, no matter how beautiful the sound is. But the sound can draw your attention out, and then you learn to not just hear the sound and then immediately label it and then are done with it, but stay a while and remain

attentive to that sound, or it might be a sequence of sounds, if it's crickets or birds, be attentive and remain there, and let the sound be there. And then you have what we mentioned this morning with reference to the visual, where you have the sense perception, the visual sense perception happens against the background of stillness, and now also the auditory sense perception happens also in the field of stillness, or against the background of stillness.

So to every sense perception, there is a background. We could also call it the ground. In ordinary consciousness, humans are not aware of the ground, which is awareness.

The background, the entire substratum, to use a term from geology. So as you listen to the sound, which is in the foreground of your consciousness, you're also aware of the background, and the background is very hard to describe in any way because it is not something. The sound is something.

And as it is something, it is born and eventually it dies. The background is not born and dies, it's always there, unchanging. So you are lost in a surface world of external appearances and things, when you do not know that dimension, the background dimension, that could also be called the unmanifested.

But I'm using a somewhat different pointer. Some pointers can be more helpful to certain people. So there is the background, and to see that as you sit, stand, lie, you listen, there's the sound.

Do I have a bell here? It dissolved. I want you to demonstrate how a sound comes into being and then goes out of existence, slowly fades out.

But we have something even better, the entire bell has faded out of existence. So to be aware of that is amazing. One can also call it a field of peace that underlies your perceptions.

A background peace. And imagine having that background peace in human interactions, how that changes everything between human beings. Let's put that aside for a moment and stay with just the sounds, it's a little easier.

Humans are complicated. And you will notice that when you fall back into the dream state of being identified with the stream of thinking, all the subtle sounds around you, you don't even notice. You don't hear them.

Your attention is elsewhere. Your attention, your consciousness, is being absorbed by thought continuously. There isn't much left for anything else.

There isn't also much left for creativity or anything new to come in. It's all repetitive. And so here, you are making space inside you for, there's no other way for something truly new to arise in your life.

You have something truly that comes out of the freshness of the unmanifested, the freshness of being itself, and takes on form, a thought, a word, an action, some creation perhaps, a work of art, a work of this or that, or simply a way of being with others that has a different quality than the normal way of being with others. So that's the only way something truly new can come in, because no matter how your life changes on the surface, it's not a true change. You could, if your bank account is empty now and you win 10 million dollars, on the external level things will change, but that's not very much.

The same set of problems that you have now, or a very similar one, will arise again. The fear of not enough is not going to go away, perhaps for a few weeks, and again it might become magnified because you have a bigger scenario for you to play out your drama. And if you are rich and famous, then they can write about you and your drama.

That's all, and it looks bigger, but it's just like everybody else's. It's just when the drama is played out between the two famous actors in a mansion, it looks interesting. It's not interesting at all.

It's the same drama that happens everywhere else, and there's nothing new, it's repetitive. And then they get a divorce and marry somebody else and it starts again. So for something truly new to arise, you need to find, not create as such, because it's already there, you need to find, one could say, that dimension of space.

One could say you have to make space, yes. In one way that's the space already wants to come through, the spatial consciousness. In another, one could say it requires your cooperation, you have to make room, and it's a beautiful, more harmonious emergence.

If it pushes, it wants to come through, and there's a heavy egoic structure, it may still come through, but it has to create havoc in your life first, because the shell has to break. And then you're struck by some disaster that breaks the shell of ego, whatever it may be. And so there are people here who have already experienced some kind of disaster in their lives, some great loss, where their life is threatened or where everything collapsed, and something began to come through that otherwise there was no space there, because there was all the mind objects that one had identified with as oneself, covering up the vastness, the infinite possibilities, the infinite potential that is there in the unmanifested, in the background, in the space consciousness. So these are two, these are beautiful pointers that there is in you object consciousness, which is thought, which is mental images, anything that has form is object consciousness.

For most humans, all they ever experience in their life is object consciousness. Their entire life experience consists of a succession of arising and subsiding objects, and they try to hang on to a bundle of mental objects that they think, that's me. Mental images, names, labels, what they think of me, how it has been taught to think of who they are.

But what are all these things? They are thought forms that you hang on to, and you put

some, you wrap it with something, cling wrap, whatever, that holds it together, a very fragile structure, and this is, that's me, and it consists of mental objects, many of which are mental, the mental counterpart of material objects or material achievements. So there's the shiny, new, flashy car, which in itself, of course, is not important because it's going to rust in a few years, it'll be gone, and all it can do is take you from A to B.

It's nice, yes, we can appreciate these things, but if they become an object, then a mental form arises, which is not just car, it's my car, my is the important thing, because then the thought object of car becomes invested with a sense of self, it's not just a car, I relate to it, I'm looking for myself in it. So the mind object, the thought object car becomes very important to me. And if somebody scratches your car, or even dents it accidentally, it feels, if you identify with that as my car, it feels you are being injured personally.

And anger arises because somebody's attacking you, or let them say that somebody says, well, this may be a nice car, but my uncle has one that's much bigger than yours. Can't be. And you feel diminished in your sense of self, that's how people play their ego games.

One little ego tries to diminish another little ego by claiming that my uncle has something bigger than you. I don't have it, but it's enough, it's my uncle, so there's some association. Because it's my, so it's an indirect thing that I can identify with.

Of course it's absurd and funny, but a lot of human interaction works in that way. And so you identify with, you may then identify with other things that are a little bit more subtle. Other people's opinion of you, which becomes also a mind, a mental image, knowledge, acquired knowledge, a certain skill that you have.

You may be extremely good at hitting a ball, and it's a great thing. If you are a master at hitting a ball one way or another, then probably in that field of activity, if you are truly a master, you are probably present, at least during that time when you're hitting the ball, when you're playing the game, when you're in the zone, you're not thinking, you're not planning, there's no decision making. Right action happens every moment, and there's a power, and then people love to watch you.

But then what happens? When you stop playing the game, you re-enter the normal state of consciousness. And then you identify with that skill, it becomes a mind object.

You are better at it than anybody else, and the world is telling you that. So that is something also, and then somebody else suddenly comes who is even better than you and they chuck you out. You're no longer captain of the team or whatever it is.

Oh no. And that's very painful when a mind object, something you had identified with, is taken away, dissolves, great loss, great pain. So most humans only know themselves as

objects, object in the realm of object consciousness.

Such a pity when it's, there is so much more to human life, there's an entire realm that's always been there and humans just haven't looked at it. They've been so seduced by the world of objects, both the external objects in their world as well as the inner objects in their mind, they've been so seduced by the world of objects, so fascinated by objects, so completely identified with the things of this world, that they forgot that there is an entirely different, other dimension to their being than that. Which has never gone away.

The great thing is that you cannot destroy space consciousness. You can ignore it. You cannot know that it's there underneath the accumulated object consciousness, yes, but it is there.

You cannot even, in the most obsessed person, obsessed with thinking, you see it's not a moment of continuously one next thing and the next thing, one damn thing after another. Churchill's definition of history, one damn thing after another. But we could also define the human mind as that, it comes one thing after another.

And never aware that there is this vast realm within them that would free them from dependency on the world of things, which includes their mind, because it's objects, object consciousness. That vast realm is there and they never know it. It's like a beggar sitting, trying to get a few cents from someone who's going to give, and he's been sitting on a box filled with gold.

I gave that example at the beginning of the book. He's been sitting on this box filled with gold, but he's never looked. He's only looked out there.

Or we could say a more modern version of that. He's been sitting there and never realized that he has a bank account in Switzerland and that has a hundred million dollars in it and he wants... Now this is a somewhat deficient parable, because even if somebody truly, if the beggar had a bank account in Switzerland with a million dollar in it, wouldn't really make that much difference to his life, because it's so much deeper than that.

But it's a parable for people who can think you've already gone beyond it. But I put it at the beginning of the book, because most people know only the realm of objects. So a box full of gold works as a metaphor for a while, but it's not ultimately the right metaphor, because it's so much greater than any entire gold in the world.

And so that space consciousness is in you, has never gone away, but been ignored. The peace, the stillness. And I'm presenting here, apart from the fact, which is more important, that as we sit here, it arises from within you, even if you didn't want it.

But I'm also pointing out little entry points into it. We've already seen bringing a yes to the present moment is an entry point. When you accept the form, form is a thing, is an object.

When you accept the form that this moment takes as something that happens, or an inner form, an emotion that arises, when you do not resist the form that arises, and the normal state of consciousness is almost continuous denial or resistance of the form, because you want another one in the next moment, a better one, a different one, a more fulfilling one, not this form of the present moment, I want a different form. Or if I don't have it, at least I can think about it, so I don't have to look at this.

I imagine the next moment is going to be better than this one. It won't if you haven't fully acknowledged this one. So, when you accept the form that this moment takes, that is the miracle, the form of this moment becomes an opening into the formless within you.

And the worse, the more challenging the form that this moment is, and you accept it, the deeper it takes you into the unconditioned space consciousness or into peace. So, if you were faced with a dreadful disaster in your life, it arises at this moment. Everything has collapsed, and you face it and see that the is-ness of this moment just is as it is.

You look death in the face. You accept the form that this moment takes completely, and suddenly you sense something that cannot really be described. It's a spaciousness or peace around that dreadful event.

It happens within a field of peace or space. And I wouldn't use here the word happy. You're not happy when that happens, nor are you unhappy.

It is beyond happiness and unhappiness. There's a serenity and a peace that come. But you can experience even with little things.

Surrender to a little thing, a little form that this moment takes, a little challenge, and you find a little peace. Oh, nice. You surrender to the cold soup that I mentioned yesterday.

And you find that the cold soup is giving you a little peace. It's not the soup. It's changed your state of consciousness.

It's gone, oh, okay, okay. You make room for it to happen. You allow it to happen.

You make space for it to happen. Humans don't make space for things to happen. They want to remove space from things.

So now, if something is happening and you make space for it, you become the space. And this is the grace that is hidden underneath so-called bad events. Now, bad events have a scale.

They start with a cold soup, very little, and go on to some dreadful accident, disaster, imminent death, or everybody around you died, or you lost everything, or somebody tells you you only have three more weeks to live. You have the scale. Something dreadful,

something so-called bad happens in your life, and then there's a scale.

Cold soup is easy, but for some, that's a challenge too. And so, for some, it sets the whole pattern. They have a cold soup and the rest of the day is spoiled.

They don't make room for events. They don't allow an event to be. They argue with reality.

I saw a cartoon once. It's hard to describe, but I'll attempt it. It showed people wearing placards.

It's become some kind of protest march, and the placards contained only horizontal lines. And the entire surroundings, the street and the houses, were drawn in vertical lines. So the message is, we are against it.

Whatever it is, we are against it. So if you make room for something to be, it can only be this moment because nothing can be apart from the now. You make room for something to be.

It already is, so why not allow it? Allow it to be. And this act of allowing, easy to do when you face something beautiful.

I allow this beautiful tree with the magnificent colors to be. That's easy. And then you walk one more step and suddenly you think your right foot goes right into the mud.

And there comes a minor challenge. Can you immediately say, oh, it already has happened. It is already.

Not much you can do except, of course, pull your foot out and walk on. But usually, of course, it would lead to a reaction. So some words may then come out of your mouth.

Contraction happens. And maybe there could be an immediate attempt to blame someone. This is what the ego likes to do.

Something goes wrong. Who can I blame? It says the ego.

They should have warned people about this. Or if you are in the States, then the favorite thing is go to a lawyer and sue them. So, and this is a beautiful practice.

There are many things that in quotation marks, go wrong in your life, are actually the greatest things. In a way, even greater than the beautiful trees, because they can take you deeper. And so to a large extent, the world is here for you to experience things going wrong.

And that is the challenge of the world. And if you still think otherwise, you may have lived on this planet for 50, 60 or 70 years and still expect things not to go wrong. Now,

the illusion that you can have things not going wrong, you can still live in that illusion if you live in an advanced industrialized country, perhaps.

Travel to India, and you can no longer live in the illusion that things around you are solid and that you are in control. You're not. Nothing that you plan is going to work out.

Everything is going to be totally different from the way you expect it. And things will constantly challenge you, forms. And wherever you look, the world is not as solid as it seems to be here.

Wherever you go, there are old people, dying people in the street. Are they not? Where are the old and dying people here?

I don't see any. They're shut away. We mustn't look.

Just pretend that they don't exist. We put them away there. The old go here, and the dying, we put them there.

And the dead bodies never look, must never see a dead. It's very hard, unless you have a very close relative. If you ever want to see a dead body, they won't let you.

They say, you're mad. But if you're in India, you see dead bodies very easily. It's normal.

And so you get a much better sense of the fragile nature of the world of things, objects, and forms, how insubstantial this world actually is. And it's only in the West that you have the illusion that the world of form is very substantial, solid, and is going to last. It has a solidity and permanency.

It doesn't. And when sometimes a gigantic man-made form collapses, like two years ago in New York, that comes as a dreadful shock to people, because it looked so solid and it collapsed. So the world of objects isn't as solid as it seems to be.

The world of bodies isn't as permanent and solid as it seems to be. It is very, very fragile, fleeting, insubstantial. So if that's all you know, then you are in this fleeting, insubstantial universe, and there's nothing.

And of course, there's constant fear when you identify with that, even though they try to just... It's very, very much like the Buddha, because the story goes that he was born into great wealth, and his father did not want him to see that there is poverty, that people grow old, and that people die. So he had already reached a fairly advanced age.

He was, I don't know, I can't remember, 25, 30, whatever, and wasn't really aware that there's such a thing as old and dying people, because he lived in what seems almost like the West these days, that's shut away. And one day he saw it. His father didn't want him to see it because it had been predicted he would either become a great king or a great spiritual teacher, and the father didn't want him to become a spiritual teacher.

He wanted him to carry on the business of being a king, the family business. And so, but the father had made the biggest mistake he could have made. He waited for so long when finally he did go out.

It was such a shock when he saw that people lying in the streets dying and ill and old, and he saw dead bodies. He said, what is this? Does this happen?

What happened to this man? He's not moving anymore. He said, he is dead.

Dead? Yes. And that happens to everyone?

And what's the point in anything? What's? Oh.

And soon later, he left everything behind. In the middle of the night, the story goes, when everybody was asleep, and this is a beautiful metaphor, everybody around him was asleep, and he walked out. If that's all there is, so his search then was for that dimension, is there something else to life than just that?

And it lasted a few years. And he tried all the practices, tried to achieve a state of perfection. He got very good at all the practices, and yet they didn't take him to the realization of space consciousness.

And one day, he almost starved himself to death when he said, I've had enough. This is my translation of the sutras again. He said, enough is enough.

Give me some food. And they brought him some food. Most disciples left him.

He said, oh, he's lost his way. He's eating again. And then he ate normally, and he sat under a tree.

And suddenly something happened. All resistance collapsed. He was no longer looking for anything to happen.

There was surrender to what is, not looking for some state anymore. And there it was. The last thing that, in this film, The Little Buddha, which has some nice things in it, although it's too much about the legendary Buddha, but there's still beautiful scenes in it.

The last thing that disturbs him is when he's sitting under a tree, and he sees his reflection in a little pool of puddle of water, self-reflection. And he sees his face in the little puddle of water next to him, and he's fascinated by that suddenly. And suddenly, an arm comes out of this pool of water and tries to pull him down.

This is, and he frees himself, and then the reflection is gone. This is the last attempt by the ego to be there as an object in his consciousness, to see himself as someone, to remain there as an object in his consciousness, a mental object, to make one, making

himself into a mental, this is normal consciousness, making himself into a mental object, and then have a bathroom mirror that I love myself. I love myself.

You have a relationship with yourself. Of course, it's better to love yourself than to hate yourself. It makes life a little easier.

But when you love yourself, there's always, on the other side, the possibility that you might also hate yourself. Better to go beyond loving and hating yourself by not having a relationship with yourself at all, by simply being yourself. And you can only be yourself as space consciousness, not as an object.

So, anything that goes wrong in your life, a form that appears, and you allow it to be, that form becomes an opening into the formless within you. So, your spiritual practice is whenever something goes wrong in your life, and luckily enough, it happens a lot. Not saying that you cannot improve your life, you can improve your life greatly.

You can create a much better reality for yourself, which is nice. You can create through applying the power of thought and action and visualization, you can improve your life considerably. You can live in a bigger, more beautiful place, feel better about yourself, and so on.

But you cannot escape from the other arising, sooner or later. Another polarity, no matter what situation you go into, and I'm not saying you shouldn't improve your life, it's great. But do not expect it to be free of the other polarity, which will arise, even in the mansion, something will go wrong.

And that's what the gossip magazines are all about. The gossip magazines are about things going wrong in mansions. And that makes people feel a little bit better about things going on in their little houses, but it's the same.

And they love reading about famous people, things going wrong in their lives. Oh, isn't that great? Their lives are all collapsing, just like mine.

So one thing that usually happens that when something goes wrong, it pulls you into the old, it strengthens the reactivity of the old mind structures. There's complaining and running away and shouting and fighting. But there's the possibility, when you recognize the little thing, big thing going wrong, so to speak, that it isn't really wrong, you work with it.

You work with it by not resisting the is-ness of the suchness. Buddha has this beautiful expression, suchness, the suchness. And you work with that, rather than resisting it, allowing the suchness of what is right now, the form that this takes.

And if the form that this takes should be a limitation, may seem a limitation on your sense of freedom, your freedom of movement, a limitation on what you want to do, a

limitation on where you want to get to, and suddenly something rises up in front of you, a door, a wall. You're trying to go that way, and suddenly there comes, there's a closed door, metaphorically speaking, or literally speaking. Once we arrived at a place to give a talk, rented a hall.

There was already a long line up outside. Nobody had the key. And there was nobody there.

They'd all gone home. So 200 people were lining up, some were getting angry. I arrived, can't get in.

So you're actually faced with a wall. So what do you do? You then start shouting?

No, of course, you take action. Can you call somebody? Maybe somebody somewhere has a key and maybe they can come.

Okay, somebody did that. But in the meantime, here we are. What was there to do except to cooperate with that moment?

So I would just go say, greet everybody in the lineup. And everybody was very happy. And almost by the time I reached the last person, somebody had arrived with a key, as if it had been planned.

Now the strange thing is, when you cooperate and allow something to be that initially looks like an obstacle, initially looks like something has gone wrong, and both little and small, when you allow it to be, it becomes an opening into something that you cannot predict what that is. It changes its face from hostile to benign and helpful. The very event that seemed hostile turns around on the external level very frequently.

Even more importantly, on an inner level, the shift happens. But you cannot really separate what happens on the outside from what happens on the inside. The inner shift happens and then the significance of that situation changes also.

So that really is the true spiritual practice, is to work with all the little and big things in one's life that seem to be obstacles or blockages. They, whatever arises in the now, I'm not talking about some mental formations and in the dream world of thinking, actual obstacles, actual things going wrong, losing this, missing that, meeting somebody and it's the wrong time, it's the wrong place. And don't try to figure out why this has happened.

It's very often, more often than not, it's impossible because you may not think there must be a deeper reason why this has gone wrong. That's a secondary thing. If you are to know the deeper reason, you would suddenly be staring you in the face.

You can't miss it. But in the meantime, you don't even need to figure out what the

deeper reason is. It's enough to allow what is to be and then see what happens.

It doesn't prevent you from taking action. If you can't take action, you take action. But in the meantime, the form that this moment takes is given space to be.

And there's the key. Then that which had looked like an obstacle, a blockage, becomes an opening into space consciousness. So the archetypal image of that that humanity has is the cross.

And people misinterpret it and even Christians don't fully understand the deeper significance of the cross because the cross is the worst thing that could possibly happen. It's an archetypal suffering. The man on the cross is humanity.

The cross is the archetype of suffering. The cross is a torture instrument. The cross means complete helplessness, complete pain, extreme pain.

But also it means surrender. Not my will, but thy will be done. Thy will is the will of the whole that has brought about the form that this moment takes.

And then surrender happens. And it's strange that the torture instrument is a symbol for the divine at the same time. And it turns into a symbol for the divine through the act of surrender.

Somebody once said, I don't know who, but it is very wise, that which stands in the way is the way. And I said in this book, *Stillness Speaks*, that which seemed to deny the existence of any transcendental dimension to life becomes an opening into that dimension. Because it sometimes happens that a grave, a serious illness, a dreadful disaster in your life, something going dreadfully wrong to someone close to you, it seems to deny any meaning.

It destroys often people's belief. Christians sometimes come to me and say, I've lost my faith because this or that has happened to me or to my wife or to my children, my son. And I can't just, how could that happen?

I've been, they don't realize that they were still at a childish stage in their faith. They had some deal with God. If I do the right things, nothing bad.

Okay, do we have a deal? I do all the right things, then nothing bad will happen. But that's not how the universe, because what they're saying is no form will ever dissolve in my life.

I will not encounter death or the accidental dissolving of some form. And so they came, and it was good that they lost their faith, because then they went deeper. After losing their faith, they realized that that level of faith was childish, although it, for a while, it helped them, and then it didn't work anymore.

So they had to lose and then go deeper to something far more substantial than that and learn to, the deep lesson that is there, when you totally accept any form of death in your life, because very often it is that something dissolves, something leaves you, comes to an end, and it looks bad, and then you allow it to be. Now, you may not be able to allow it to be immediately. The pain, the pain that you feel, the emotional pain may be there, and there's nothing you can do.

You weep, but then you allow that to be. It does not matter where you begin to allow what is to be. Ideally, you allow the form at this moment to be as it is totally, and so there's no arising of any pain.

But that is not always possible yet for humans. So sometimes, an event like the death of somebody close to you, the death of a parent, the death of a sibling, or even more hard, more difficult, the death of a child, it happens. Forms dissolve in their own time.

There's no predicting when a life form, the form will dissolve, and so pain will come. You may weep, and you may experience that's the sadness, and there you can allow that to be, so that it comes to be space around what you feel. There's a deep allowing of the sadness that you feel, and then there's space around it.

And that's how you may feel that the sadness, underneath it, you've already touched the peace underneath the sadness. It's already there. But you have to allow the sadness, not saying, I shouldn't be feeling sad.

I should be feeling peace. I shouldn't be feeling sad. I should be allowing this moment.

No, but that's not the fact of this moment. The fact of this moment is what you feel at this moment. So the yes to what is, the primary yes is to whatever arises.

The secondary yes is the yes to whatever you feel about that which arises. In the smaller example, you're on the road, the car breaks down, a little thing goes wrong, depending what country you're in. In some country, your life may be threatened if you get stranded by the road, or in some big city in North America too, in some parts of big cities.

But so it could be a big thing or a relatively small thing. And again, you may just, you may succeed in this not-so-big event to say, that's how it is. And then you face it completely and say, okay, what action can I take?

You become still and then action happens. But it's possible also that you look at the engine and you go, oh, but no, this is not okay. And suddenly you become conscious of what you feel, the anger that arises.

And then you go, oh. And what can you do? You have to, it is what is.

At this moment, there's anger. And then comes the secondary allowing. You allow the

inner, what is on the inner.

You give that space. Because the amazing thing is, whatever emotion is passing through your system, there's always far more space than the emotion. You just have to find it.

There's a vast spaciousness in you that is greater than any emotion that can hold any emotion and allow it to be. It's there. So there's suddenly some space around the anger.

You've stepped back from the anger into space. There's always more space than things in space. You can verify that tonight.

The sky may be clear tonight, still be clear. And you look up into, you go away from the few lights that there are. You can see vast stars, suns.

Most of the stars that you see, except for the few planets, are suns at great distances. And you only see a tiny fraction of the infinite vastness of the universe. And when you look, you can see there are two dimensions.

There are things in space, and there's space. So easy. There are things in space, and there is space.

But that which is awe-inspiring about when you look up there is not the things in space. What is awe-inspiring is the vastness of it. Infinite, unimaginable vastness of space.

Billions, not just billions of suns, billions of worlds of galaxies. Each galaxy consists of billions of suns. Vast.

And you look, it stops your mind when you truly look. Unimaginable vastness. Yes, the suns and whatever else is there is beautiful to look at, but that sense of sacredness of unimaginable vastness is the space that you look into.

And this is just the external version of what is within you. Within you also, because you're only a microcosm, microcosmic version of the universe, in you also there are things, objects in your consciousness, and there is the vastness of consciousness itself. The uncreated.

Buddha calls it the unborn, the uncreated, the unformed. He doesn't, and this is so wise to put it like that, because by saying that it is almost impossible to make it into a mental object, because the word itself denies itself as an object. It denies itself by saying the unborn, on the one hand you have a word that is an object in consciousness, but the object in consciousness denies its very existence as an object.

This is why the Buddhist teaching is so profound. So he says to his monks, there is, oh monks, that's how he addresses his monks in the translation, there is, oh monks, an unborn, uncreated, unformed, unmanifested. And then it goes on, it's a little bit stylized sutra, if there were not an unborn, uncreated, unformed, unmanifested, there would be

no escape from the world of the born, the created, the formed, and the manifested.

Beautiful pointer. So isn't it amazing that you encounter it, not by running away from the world of forms around you, not by attempting to escape the limitations that the world of forms seems to impose on you continuously, and there's this longing for freedom in every human being. And most human beings look at their life situation as a set of limitations around them.

It usually is, because every form is limited. Even if you were extremely wealthy after a while, that would become a limitation on you. You have to have walls around your big house and need bodyguards to go out.

So, and then there are the limitations that the body at some point becomes a limitation on you, no matter how fit it is at this moment, eventually you'll grow old and it may be a little more difficult to get up.

[Speaker 2] (1:04:56 - 1:04:59)

Oh, my back hurts.

[Speaker 1] (1:05:00 - 1:27:42)

Or a more serious limitation, and many limitations happen because form is limitation. And there's a longing in humans for freedom from limitation. Freedom.

And people believe that this freedom can be found in some situation. This is not to say that you cannot improve your life situation, it is wonderful to do that, work to improve your life situation, live in a nicer place, but not as in believing that that will free you. It's nice because when you play with the world of form, it's nice to have beautiful forms around you if you can, but don't depend on them too much, because you juggle these forms and then one drops, and then before you know another one drops, and then somebody throws you on more.

Okay. So the escape from limitation is not the escape from the limitations of form in your life, it's through the seeming limitations, by allowing the form of this moment, which quite often seems to be a limitation on your life, by allowing it internally to be as it is. So one could almost say you walk through the limitation, not away from it, you don't run away from it, you face it.

And as you face it, allow it to be, it's no longer a limitation, that's inner freedom. So you find inner freedom often in the worst of circumstances people have found it. They found it in prison camps, they found it through serious illness, they found it through serious disability, they found it through loss of everything that they had and identified with, and suddenly they were driven into acceptance of what is.

And then the very limitation around them became an opening. And so some people in prison are living this teaching also. I get more and more letters from people in prison who have become free in prison.

And some reported, a couple, that they got released prematurely and they were not even up for parole. Suddenly it happened. But it was a secondary bonus.

The miracle is that often a difficult situation, even on the external level, changes and shows a more benign face. But that is a secondary bonus that you get as you surrender. And that it is truly miraculous what you can experience as you, as there's a shift in that consciousness, how quickly an external situation can turn around, how quickly help can come in, because you now cooperate with life, which is now, never not now.

You cooperate with this moment. There's no resistance to life, which is now. And then life can help, because the entire universe is a field of intelligence.

Nothing is dead. Everything is an expression of that intelligence, that consciousness. It's in the very space in this room.

And then it gets through the human, it becomes focalized, but it's all pervasive. The human is like a magnifying glass that you hold because there's sunshine and then you have, it concentrates it. But it's everywhere.

And then life becomes helpful in sometimes miraculous ways. Suddenly the right person comes, the right event comes, the right thing comes. But this is not, this is what Jesus calls the things that you need will be added unto you.

It is secondary. The inner shift is primary. What Jesus describes as finding the kingdom of heaven, which is here now, not over there, some other place, some other time, that is primary, that shift.

And then what happens in the world of things is secondary. But miraculously, more often than not, a shift in the world of things will reflect the inner shift. And if it doesn't, the energy that you bring to it will change it.

So in other words, maybe they won't release you yet from prison, maybe you're still there, and yet you become a factor in that place that usually would be called bad, that is healing and brings enormous help and healing to all, to those around you. There are people who are now teach, who are in prison and teach this already. So they are exactly where they are meant to be.

It's amazing how either the situation changes or that which you bring to the situation changes. And so the quality feel of the situation becomes different. And so the work then is, you can now see, to welcome the moment, no matter what form it takes, particularly if it looks not good on the surface.

That's where the power, your work, if you can call it work, I don't like that word, but particularly when this work becomes powerful, when applied to all those many events in your life that look not right, wrong, shouldn't have happened, it's not what I want. There you apply becoming friendly with what is. Then the limitation of what is becomes your portal into freedom from the form, your dependency on the forms, your inner dependency for your sense of who you are, your sense of well-being, of peace on forms.

That goes. And so then you can say what Jesus said, I have overcome the world, he said. People didn't understand what he was talking about.

Maybe one or two understood. How can he say I've overcome the world? He has no power at all.

Where's his army? He doesn't have, he's powerless. How he hasn't over, he was talking about the inner realm, dependency on things for his inner state.

Because all these, the teachings of humanity, the deep teachings, they do not come from a person. They are nobody's possession or achievement. They come when someone, a person, a human form becomes transparent in their personal selfhood.

The objects become loose and let through space consciousness. There are still some objects in the mind, yes, this and that, but not self-identification with the objects. So they don't form this crust of self that blocks that which is underneath.

So there's, it can come, it comes through. You become transparent to that spaciousness. And then something comes through you into this world.

It may be through words. It may be through action. It may be through a simple, invisible emanation of your being that does something to, even to this world of things.

It changes things here too. It makes it more harmonious, a more benign place to be, a less harsh place. Yes, where polarities still exist, but in a more benign way.

In other words, you become an instrument for healing, in a very wide sense of the word, for peace. Peace comes through you into this world. And it is the peace that you cannot understand, that Jesus didn't understand either, because he said, the peace that passes all understanding.

So in other words, he didn't understand it either. His mind didn't understand. The way it comes from the depths of it, you become a field of peace in this world.

It's almost as if something from another dimension came through you into this world of form and affects the world of form. So the, this is your destiny also, to become that transparency as you, as the crust of identification with mental objects breaks up, dissolves, something shines through. And so in many of you, you already bring, as you

go out into the world, you bring peace into situations simply by being there, by not stepping out of the old reactive consciousness.

We'll be talking again what that means in relationships in more detail. So when you allow the form that this moment takes to be your own form, the psychological form of me, becomes somewhat transparent. When you resist the form that this moment takes, your own psychological form, the form of me, becomes more solidified, rigid, impenetrable.

And you can actually feel that in yourself. When you go into a situation and you have contraction and resistance, you argue you won't need to be right. And you can see in that need to argue, to be right, to win.

Your own psychological sense of self contracts and becomes more hardened. The me, you get a stronger sense of self, a stronger sense of who you are. But it's the illusion of who you are.

When you can triumph over somebody and show them that you are right and not they, or that you have more than they, or you know more than they, or can do more than they, or you are more miserable than anybody else, it works either way. As long as it's more, you are ill, I've been ill for years. I have more than you.

I may not have more money than you, but I'm more ill than you. And this is the madness of the human condition. When you resist what is, the form hardens the self.

And when you allow what is, it softens. And as it softens, it becomes transparent. And something shines through that is spacious.

You become spacious. And I am sure it also does something even to your physical form. Although scientists don't know, haven't discovered what that is.

Maybe they haven't examined a surrendered human being yet. Maybe they haven't heard about it yet. And as humanity begins to live in this way, or a larger part of humanity, of course, it is likely that the physical organism will also undergo changes.

Perhaps there'll be even more space than there is already. Already you consist of 99% empty space. Scientists know that.

The atoms, the space between the atoms that make up your body is so vast that you are more than 99% empty space. In Zen Buddhism, they have satori. Satori is a sudden flash, a sudden realization.

Not always lasting, but it's there. Sometimes accompanied by shouting or laughter. And then you have the Chinese fat Buddha who never stops laughing.

Continuous satori. Tomorrow evening, when it comes, of course, it won't be tomorrow. Tomorrow evening, I believe there's a film that you can go and see that is a very good

film.

It's called Fierce Grace about the life of Ram Dass and his stroke and how that changed him and the meaning of adversity and pain. It kind of illustrates also what we have been addressing here. Also, if any questions need to be asked, there is no...

I don't want to devalue questions. No question, however, is ultimately vital. Many questions arise from the mind, but there are some questions that you feel you truly need to know the answer to, and it may not have yet come through you.

If you become still enough, the answer to any question, the answer if you need it, it will come through you. But if there should be questions, you can write them on a little piece of paper and leave them. There may be a basket or something like that there tomorrow, after the session tomorrow.

And I'll look through them, and maybe a few will jump out and address them. A few will maybe questions that are very helpful to everybody. And questions that are purely mental, I may not have time to answer, nor may I have the answer to them.

For example, can you describe the lives of the future Buddhas? Or who were the past Buddhas? Or what about the life on planet so-and-so?

It's not vital to know that right now, for your liberation. So use whatever the moment presents, both the beauty that is out here, and anything else that may happen. They're all openings.

The beauty too is an opening. The beauty that you see, the beauty that you listen to. Remember what we started with today?

Enter Zen from there, from this moment, whatever it is. Pay attention, be alert, watch. If you resist this moment, you cannot be attentive to what is.

Remember to work with the sounds, bring awareness to the sounds around you, and sense the awareness itself as yourself. So you are that awareness, you are that consciousness, and the personal appearance, the appearance of you as a person, is a temporary disguise of consciousness. Hide and seek.

Let's pretend that I'm a human, a person. Oh, that will be fun. And let's play some dramas.

Yes, but for the dramas, you have to forget completely who you are. Okay, then let me forget completely who I am, and play the drama. And then you get tired of the drama.

After a few hundred thousand years, and then after we've played, let's wake up. Oh, thank you.